

# Houghton Area Master Plan Citizen's Review Committee June 10, 2003

CRC members attending: Peter Backus, Suzanne Bott, Dale Calvert, Sarah Craighead, Sheila Enos, Margaret Fowler, Mark Frederickson, John Grabo, Margie Hildebrand, Curtis Lueck, Lex McGraw, Suzanne Miles, Tony Novelli, Cathy Rex, Frank Salbego, Thomas Sayler-Brown, Jeff Simms, Phil Swaim, Michael Tone, Frank Wilczek, Michelle Zimmerman.

CRC members absent: Ken Abrahams, Brent Davis, Sandie Jacobson, John Macko, Linda Morales, Peggy Nolty, Ray Schneider, Roy Schoonover, James/Betty Shinn

TAT members attending: Richard Harper (Tucson Police Department), Steve Munsell (Pima County Wastewater), Mark Crum (City Department of Operations) and Frank Sousa (City of Tucson Stormwater Section)

## **Opening**

Facilitator Freda Johnson opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. She led a round of introductions, and then reviewed the ground rules. She then asked for comments or corrections to the meeting summaries of April 11 and May 13. There were no comments, so the summaries were accepted. There were some requests for copies of the tapes of the last meeting, and a request that the summaries be published on email. There was also a request that in future summaries, members absent be listed as well as members present. These requests were noted.

A change in the order of the agenda items was approved.

## **Status Report by Michael Wyneken**

Michael Wyneken presented a status report. He stated that a lot of information needs to be collected by the Task Force before it can be presented to the CRC. Staff is gathering information on roadways, flood plains, drainage, etc. These are basic constraints on development, and are critical to identify before next steps can be taken. Michael believes that staff needs to work on this over the summer. Several departments need to meet and coordinate, and consultants may be called in. Michael requested that the July and August CRC meetings be cancelled; in the interim, updates and reports would be sent out regarding progress and information.

There was a question of whether the CRC would lose two months this way, or would the schedule be extended two months at the end. Michael replied that that was unknown but would be addressed.

There was a request that this information be posted on the city website. Michael replied that he would investigate this.

There was a question about how the current State Land Department auction is proceeding, and whether the City's proposed interim policies would be applied. Michael replied that the two processes were attempting to get "in sync", but that this probably would not happen.

### **Master Planning Examples by Greg Keller**

Per the adjusted agenda, Greg Keller presented next from the State Land Department. He had color map handouts of three large master planned developments in the Phoenix area that were based on a Conceptual Plan for the area. He emphasized how the maps demonstrate the transition from areas of steep terrain and low density housing, to flatter areas with higher density housing. The Desert Ridge development in Peoria is very similar to HAMP. It has about 5,000 acres with approximately 5,400 housing units. It will have a population of 40-60,000 people. School sites are pre-set, and nine parks are designated. Each development will also be required to have open space.

Floodplain is the main feature in HAMP, and an alluvial fan is the main feature in Desert Ridge. An alluvial fan is a broad slope coming off a mountain range with no distinct drainages. The water tends to "sheet" off rather than collecting into washes. The HAMP has several distinct drainages.

Greg described how the steeper slopes of Desert Ridge were non-graded. There was a question about how could the zoned 2 to 5 units be built on non-graded land. Greg's answer was that most likely the final build-out was closer to 2 units, as it would be nearly impossible to build more densely on non-graded land. The entire area has an average zoning of 4 units per acre, including the commercial and resort spaces.

There was a comment that this community would be worth seeing, because it seemed like a good prototype. Greg offered to bring an aerial photo to the next meeting, and would facilitate a field trip if desired.

There was a question about how much land the State Land Department tends to sell at one time for projects like this. Greg answered about 5,000. Greg explained that the Department has not actively marketed land in the past, rather has waited to be approached by developers. However the Department is attempting to become more proactive now that all the Conceptual Plans are done. Parcels are then designated for commercial leasing or residential sale in packages of 50-100 acres.

Greg briefly discussed impact fees for developers. He described how developers have the option of building roadways or infrastructures such as water and sewer systems, and will get credit toward their impact fees in this manner. There was a question about how schools were funded; Greg replied that these were supported by impact fees.

## **Review of Photo Collage**

Michael thanked Greg for the presentation, and pointed out how the key principles that Gregg had addressed – land suitability and how housing density varies with it – are also key in HAMP. Natural features of land set the framework for land development, and the Task Force is attempting to set this framework with the information they are collecting. He is also waiting on the floodplain and drainage information, and then he will enlarge the HAMP area into a more detailed map.

There was discussion and agreement to skip the Power Point presentation Michael had planned, in favor of proceeding to the Photo Collage review, due to a lack of time. Members were given a hard copy of the presentation, which they can review on their own time.

Michael explained the photo review process. The photos taken by members two months ago of their neighborhoods, and features they liked in other areas, had been copied onto large poster paper and grouped into categories such as Parks & Recreation; Neighborhood Design; Open Space; Scenic Views; Street Design; Neighborhood Commercial; Wash Preservation; Drainage; Pedestrian Ways; and Art. The exercise was to view each grouping and write comments on sticky notes: yellow for features that were liked, pink for features that were not liked, and white for a member to explain a feature of a photo he or she took. About twenty minutes was devoted to this exercise. It was expected that this information could be compiled into some kind of vision statement.

The CRC returned to the tables for discussion about the photo review process. There was a comment that this was not enough time for this exercise. Another person said that the large number of notes on the Parks & Open Space category indicated a lot of interest and appreciation for this category. Comment was made that the number of notes on any sheet not be taken as any kind of “majority vote”. A member advocated the need to explore other possibilities and think outside the box.

A member asked that the CRC look at best practices that are used in other places. Someone suggested that a survey be used to help CRC members rank their priorities about features. Another person suggested a narrative be written that would summarize the comments on the posters. A final comment was that the conceptual maps for this meeting were very useful, and could be supplemented with field trips.

CRC member Mark Frederickson mentioned that he has case studies of small towns and urban developments on his computer, and that he could create a library of case studies to refer to. There was interest in reviewing these case studies, perhaps as a Power Point presentation. Tony Novelli repeated an earlier request that the group view a video by Mark Lakeman. Suzanne Bott repeated her request that we view material from Building from the Best of Tucson. After some committee discussion, it was agreed to hold the July meeting, using some of these presentations and videos, and perhaps devote the August meeting to this also. This would give the CRC information on master planning, while allowing staff time to collect their information.

The discussion returned to the idea of a survey. A member requested that it be more comprehensive, not just regarding features within five minutes of home. It was suggested that members should take photos of other communities and broaden the vision.

Tony Novelli requested that the CRC be allowed to look at the assumptions that have already been made, that the HAMP is based on. He requested that members look at the big picture, and the development guidelines on population, water resources, environmental impact, etc. He stated that the CRC may need to reconsider policies regarding these, because they may not be sustainable. For example there is controversy over whether we have a true 100-year water supply, and whether this community can continue with the same level of development as in the past. He wondered if there was any support for on-site water retention or permaculture among the Technical Advisory Team.

A member disagreed, saying that these issues were not the function of the CRC. Another member contended that these issues are exactly what the CRC is meant to address, that the CRC is the overseer to make sure the development is sustainable, and to be innovative and creative. Traffic was discussed as an example of a problem that will not get better as Tucson gets bigger.

Michael responded that there is some information on these issues in the General plan and policies, and requested again that members read the information to familiarize themselves. He encouraged the members to use the General Plan as a tool and build on it.

### **Call to the audience**

The call to the audience elicited no comments. Two Observer comment forms were turned in.

### **Close**

The plan to hold the next scheduled meeting July 8 was confirmed. Mike Wyneken will work with presenters on the agenda.

The meeting was adjourned by Freda at 8:05 p.m..

Notes submitted by Leslie Huntten